

*Mar. 18 / Administration of George Bush, 1991*

good discussions with Prime Minister Shamir on that. He had good discussions with the heads of many other governments on that. Talked to the Soviets about that, who still have an interest in the Middle East. And so, we'll just wait and see how all that develops. But I would hope that that would prove to be the case. Israel has restated its willingness to talk, and I think that's a very great thing.

Thank you all.

*Q. When will you go to the Middle East?*  
*The President.* No plans yet. It's not set.

*Note: Dr. Elie Wiesel, founder of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, spoke at 10:10 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Secretary of State James A. Baker III, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.*

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the President's Telephone Conversation With Deputy President Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress

*March 18, 1991*

On March 6 the President spoke by telephone with Nelson Mandela, the Deputy President of the African National Congress. The President and Mr. Mandela had an extended conversation on developments in South Africa, focusing on the issue of sanctions, and on the Persian Gulf situation. Mr. Mandela recognized that the President will act on the issue of sanctions at the appropriate time, when the conditions in the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of

1986 are met. The President stated that numerous changes are taking place in South Africa and that it is necessary to keep working for this change to continue. The President assured Mr. Mandela that we will consult fully with him in the months ahead. On the Gulf, Mr. Mandela reviewed the ANC position. The President outlined the coalition's efforts and goals and indicated areas of disagreement with ANC views. It was a friendly conversation.

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Appointment of Members of the Czech and Slovak-American Enterprise Fund

*March 18, 1991*

The President today announced the members of the Board of Directors of the Czech and Slovak-American Enterprise Fund. The President is extremely pleased that these distinguished leaders, representing a wide range of professional diversity, have agreed to serve on the Board. The U.S. Directors are:

*John R. Petty*, former chairman and CEO of the Marine Midland Bank (Chairman)

*David O. Maxwell*, former chairman and CEO of Fannie Mae [Federal National Mortgage Association]

*Julia M. Walsh*, managing director of Tucker/Anthony, Inc.

*Charles A. Vanik*, former Member of Congress and attorney with the law firm of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey

*Milan Ondrus*, retired vice president (Europe) of the FMC Corp.

Similar to the Polish and Hungarian-American Enterprise Funds already established, the new Fund will support private sector development. The administration in-

tends to make an initial grant of \$5 million to the Fund from money appropriated this fiscal year for East European assistance in the foreign affairs operations bill. The administration will be seeking a total \$60 million authorization from Congress for the Fund.

The Fund will be a private, nonprofit organization. The five American members of the Board of Directors will be joined by Czech and Slovak representatives at a later date. The Fund will maintain appropriate records of its activities and will file an annual report that includes a statement of an

independent auditor.

The Czech and Slovak-American Enterprise Fund may make loans, grants, and equity investments, in addition to sponsoring technical assistance, training, and other measures designed to foster the growth of a private business in all sectors of the Czechoslovak economy. As the President said in announcing this initiative during his visit to Prague last November, the Fund will “help unleash the creativity and drive of the Czech and Slovak peoples” as they build a free market economy and stable democratic rule.

## Remarks at a White House Briefing for the National Leadership of the Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade

*March 19, 1991*

Thank you for that warm welcome, and welcome to the White House. I’m delighted to see our traveling Secretary of Commerce, Bob Mosbacher, just back from Kuwait, looking good—a little jet lag on him. [Laughter] But he’s doing an outstanding job over there at Commerce. And also on my left over here, Carla Hills, who is our Trade Representative, Ambassador Hills, working very, very hard on the subject that I want to talk to you today about, hard and effectively. And, of course, Dr. Boskin, I assume you know—that I rely very heavily on him on all matters economic. So, you have our first team here. And that includes Barbara Bush. And I think it’s very appropriate that Mexico’s able Ambassador, Ambassador Petricoli, be with us. Welcome, sir.

But I haven’t done the personal name check, but I am told that the people gathered here span 50 States, from California to New York to Florida—I don’t know why they left out Texas. [Laughter] Hometown heroes who are here to really—to put it in perspective, to help lead us into the 21st century. That also brings to mind, obviously, another group of heroes—the heroes that we see on television almost every night now, in those very emotional scenes of people coming home, stepping off the planes and

into the history books—the courageous men and women of Operation Desert Storm.

But thinking of them, and looking around at this gathering of friends, I can’t help but think of the incredible contributions that Hispanic-Americans have made to the defense of this country, in peacetime and in war, 38 Congressional Medals of Honor. I think of heroes like Captain Rivera, Manuel Rivera, who grew up in the South Bronx and became an accomplished Marine pilot. One of the first to fall in the air war over the Gulf. And he had dreams of becoming an astronaut. And today he has taken his place in the stars, so that we might find a better way on Earth.

The coalition triumph in the Gulf serves to remind us how much the world continues to look to the United States of America for leadership. And it reminded us also that we are a great nation, capable of great things at home and abroad. As I said in my recent address to the joint session of the United States Congress, the real way to honor the sacrifice of our troops is to roll up our sleeves and for me, the rest of us in the White House to work with the Congress to help build a better America, a better world, a better tomorrow.

We’ve gathered here today to seize an